CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FROM THE UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR.

OBSERVANCE

Of Sunday among the Primitive Christians.

I. It is a custom almost universal, to call our Sunday by the sacred appellation of *The Sabbath*, and to represent it as identically the institution which God delivered, under that name, to the Israelites at Mount Sinai. Excepting the single circumstance of its alleged transfer from the seventh to the first day of the week, it is supposed to remain unchanged under the gospel dispensation, retaining its original divine character, and possessing all the sanctions with which it was first established and enforced; so that it still continues to be the express command of God, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh, [*now*, the first] day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."* Any neglect of this precept, at this day, is accounted a contempt of God's law, and a sin of the same heinous nature with other transgressions of the moral requirements.

Such is the opinion which has prevailed in the church for several ages. One object of this article is to point out its incorrectness. We do not mean that there is any impropriety in our setting Sunday apart from the rest of the week, as a season for religious improvement and public worship. So far, the practice is sanctioned by apostolic example, and recommended by numerous advantages, both private and general, too manifest to escape an observing eye. But, then, such a use of the day does not involve the notion that it is the ancient sabbath, and consequently subject to the laws of that institution, or that it has been made peculiarly holy time by any positive ordinance of Heaven. For this, there is no proof; and besides, the consequences of admitting the supposition, unfounded as it is, are more alarming than its advocates seem generally aware. One thing is certain, that if Sunday be indeed the Sabbath, then it can be properly observed only in the manner which the Almighty Sovereign prescribed for that day. Now, let us pause and consider what were his express directions. We have already seen that the people were forbidden every kind of labor themselves, their families, their servants, and their cattle; and this sweeping prohibition was enforced by the penalty announced in the following words: 'Every one that defileth it [the Sabbath] shall be put to death; for whosoever doeth any work therein, shall be cut off from among his people.'† But where is the family, how strict and punctilious soever, that keeps Sunday according to this command, imposing absolute rest upon their beasts, abstaining from all their domestic employments, and refusing even to gather fuel, or to kindle a fire in their dwelling? for to this length did the prohibition extend, according to God's own decision: 'They found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks, brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation, and they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones, without the camp.'* And in another passage, it is said, 'On the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord; whosoever doth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the sabbath day.'†

Nothing can be plainer, than that people ought either to comply fully with these rigorous but explicit laws, or else relinquish the common tenet, that Sunday is the sabbath. There is no little absurdity, not to say impudence, in their solemn denunciations against the laxity of orhers' observance, while they themselves habitually indulge in flagrant violations of the ancient institution, by subjecting their beasts to travel, their servants or their families to many household occupations, and by kindling fires in their dwellings; thus openly sending up the smoke of their transgression in the face of heaven and earth, as if to display their contempt of the laws they profess to own. Such is the condemnation in which the most punctilious, at the present day, must involve themselves, by maintaining the popular but unsupported opinion we have mentioned.

II. There are two or three circumstances relative to this point, which are well known, and which ought to have been, long ago, decisive with those who take the scriptures, and not tradition, for their authority. First: We find no intimation, in all the Bible, that the sabbath was ever transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week. The assertion, so often made, of that change, is, like many other current stories, a mere fable; but it is, therefore, a proof that its authors and present retailers have so deeply felt that their cause needed such support, as to be driven to their own resources, in order to supply what was wanting in the sacred record. Secondly: Though there is frequent notice of the first day of the week, in almost every part of the New Testament, still in not a single instance is it called the sabbath. On the contrary, this term, whenever it occurs in reference to any particular day, is invariably applied to the seventh. Thus, we read, 'In the *end* of the Sabbath, as it *began to dawn towards* the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre'‡ of Christ. And long afterwards, while the apostles were travelling through different countries, we find them entering into the Jewish synagogues, 'on the sabbath day,'§ it is said, and addressing the congregations already there assembled; which shows that it was on the seventh day; at which time those places were regularly opened for religious services. In reference to these Jewish services, St. Peter reminded the council of apostles and elders at Jerusalem, that 'Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day;'‖ where, it is almost needless to remark, he spoke of the seventh, and not of the first day. And what we have observed of these few instances, the reader will find applicable to all, if he take the trouble to collect, by means of a concordance, the several passages in which the expression is introduced. Thirdly: There is no command, not so much as a formal recommendation, recorded for keeping Sunday as holy time. Neither the Jewish nor the Gentile converts were ever exhorted to observe it as such; though the former must have been deeply prejudiced in favor of the seventh day, and though the latter were utterly unacquainted with the institution in question. Of course, both would need the most explicit and patient instruction on the subject were it one of the Christian ordinances. Is it likely that they would adopt the innovation, so long as they were not informed that it had been made? or that they would learn that Sunday was the sabbath, from hearing the apostles invariably call another day by that name? Indeed, is it possible, that a change so important as this is now pronounced, should have been effected, without leaving any traces, in the scriptures, either of the precept by which it was authorized, or of the exhortations with which it was enforced, or of the dissentions which it occasioned?

To these well known facts, which one would think satisfactory to every impartial mind, we may now add the following: The apostle seems to have thought the sabbath, instead of being transferred to another day, was abolished with the rest of the Mosaic institutions. This we might safely infer from what has been already stated; but it is more directly suggested by other circumstances. Our readers doubtless recollect the dispute which arose in the church at Antioch, with regard to the necessity of keeping the law of Moses. Paul and Barnabas, and some of their brethren, were sent to Jerusalem to lay this question before the rest of the apostles. When the venerable council had convened, and thoroughly debated the subject, its decision was expressed in the following letter 'to the brethren *which are of the Gentiles* in Antioch and Syria and Silicia. Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us, have troubled you with words subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised and keep the law; to whom we give no such commandment; it seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, with our beloved Barnabas and Paul: men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent, therefore, Judas, and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye do well. Fare ye well.* Certainly, had the sabbath still been obligatory, it would not have been overlooked in this letter to the Gentile brethren. Again: What does St. Paul mean when he says to the Romans, 'Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth: yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the

* Exod. xx. 8—10. † Exod. xxxi. 14

* Numb. xv. 32—35. † Exod. xxxv, 2, 3. ‡ Matt. xxviii. 1. § See Acts xiii. 14, 42, 44; xvii. 1, 2; xviii. 4. ‖ Acts xv. 21.

* Acts xv. 23, 29.

Lord he doth not regard it.'* That he meant that the observance of the sabbath, was, like circumcision, a matter indifferent in itself, is certain from what he says to the Colossians: 'Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.'† Such were St. Paul's views of the sabbath.

III. But, it is often said, if we have not the precept of the apostles, we have what is just as valid, their example, for keeping Sunday. True, we have their example for holding meetings, at least sometimes, on that day; but not, as we have already shown, for keeping it as the sabbath. As regards this particular, their practice, and that of the believers in general of their age, can be gathered only from the book of Acts, the Epistles in the New Testament, and the book of Revelation; all ecclesiastical history of a later date furnishing nothing authentic on the point. What, then, was their practice? The following are all the notices which we find recorded. St. Luke says that St. Paul and his brethren came, in their voyage, to Troas, and abode there seven days. 'And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, (ready to depart on the morrow,) and continued his speech until midnight.'‡ This was about A. D. 60. St. Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, about A. D. 56, concerning the collection for the saints, says, 'Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.'§ And if we allow that the term, *Lord's day*, was appropriated, as is probable, to the first day of the week, then we have another passage belonging to our subject: St. John says, in the beginning of his Revelation, 'I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet,' &c.‖ commanding him to write to the seven churches of Asia. This is generally supposed to have been written about A. D. 96; though some critics place its date before the destruction of Jerusalem.

The passage last quoted throws no light whatever on the practice of the first Christians with regard to the observance of Sunday, except that they sometimes distinguished it by the appellation, not of the Sabbath, but of the Lord's day, perhaps in honor of their Lord's resurrection. Of the two former passages, one shows that they were accustomed to meet together on that day, and to break bread; and the other, that it was judged peculiarly convenient for them to prepare, at that time, their donations for their poor brethren. That they abstained from their ordinary employments through the whole of the day, we have no evidence; and the want of such proof, renders it rather probable that they did not. For it is by no means reasonable to suppose that they would all spontaneously consecrate the season to rest, and to a rigorous exclusion of labor, without a general concert among themselves, or an express requirement from the Apostles, of which we must have found some traces in the New Testament.

Such is the sum of what we can collect, concerning the example of the Apostles and of their contemporary brethren; and here might we, with propriety conclude our statement.

IV. But as the views and the practice of their immediate successors must be very interesting to the curiosity of the reader, if not important to his satisfaction, we shall pursue the subject, in order to insert all the notices which are extant, of the observance of Sunday, by the Christians, down to the year 150. Some of them may not be very clear; but from the whole, taken in connexion, we shall be able to form a definite and correct opinion.

The earliest accounts which we find, after the close of the New Testament, is given by that learned and elegant writer, Pliny the Younger, who was Consul, or Governor, of the Roman Province of Bithynia. Several persons were there brought before him under the accusation of being Christians; upon which he wrote to the emperor Trajan for instructions, laying before him, at the same time, a full statement of the case, so far as he understood it. Some, he says, when arraigned, confessed themselves Christians, and were immediately punished; 'the rest owned, indeed, that they had been of that number formerly, but had now (some above three, others more, and a few above twenty years ago) renounced that error.' Pliny then subjoined the account which these apostates gave him concerning the body of Christians to which they had once belonged, 'they affirmed the whole of their guilt, or their error was, that they were accustomed to meet, on a stated day, before it was light, and to repeat, by turns, among themselves, a hymn to Christ as to a god; to bind themselves by an oath, not for any purpose of wickedness, but never to commit theft, robbery, or adultery, never to violate a promise, nor deny a trust when called upon to deliver it up; all which being concluded, it was their custom to separate, and then to assemble again in order to partake in common of a harmless meal.'* This was written between the years 102 and 111; and of course it relates to the customs of the Christians at that period and a few years before. By it we discover that there was a *stated* day on which they first met, to honor Christ in hymns, and to bind themselves to the strict observance of virtue; and on which they again assembled to partake of a common meal, answering, perhaps, to the breaking of bread mentioned in the New Testament. What this *stated day* was, we are not told; but the conjectures that it was Sunday, the day of our Saviour's resurrection, seems to be favored by the circumstance, that they met before dawn, the very hour at which Christ rose from the dead, in order to repeat hymns to his honor. And the circumstance goes just as far to show that they convened, not to keep the sabbath, but to commemorate the great event which completed the Christian system and brought life and immortality to light.

To a period but a few years later, belongs a passage from the Epistles of Ignatius, who was bishop, or chief minister of the great church of Antioch, and who wrote either in the year 107 or 116. Having cautioned his brethren against continuing 'to live according to the Jewish laws,' he proposed, for their imitation, the example of those who, though 'brought up in these ancient laws, came nevertheless to the newness of hope, no longer observing the sabbath, but living according to the Lord's resurrection.'† If these epistles be genuine, of which there is, indeed, some doubt, the preceding passage is decisive proof that Ignatius thought the sabbath abolished; and if, by their living according to the Lord's resurrection, he meant, as critics suppose, their assembling on Lord's day, it shows that he believed the custom to be occasioned and sanctioned only by the fact that Christ then rose from the dead. It was a special observance of the Lord's resurrection.

We have but one other testimony to adduce. Justin Martyr, a very eminent Christian father of the second century, addressed a labored Apology for his religion to the Roman emperor, about A. D. 150. In this work, he took occasion to describe the manners and customs of the Christians; and among other things, gave a particular account of their services on Sunday, together with the reasons for their observing that day. 'On what is called the day of the Sun,' so he expresses it, 'all who live either in cities or in the country, assemble in one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles and writings of the prophets are read, as time permits. Then, after the reader has finished, the President instructs the people in an address, and exhorts them to imitate the excellent things which they have heard. Next, we all rise up together, and draw near to God in prayers. When we have ended our prayers, bread and wine and water are presented to us; and the President then offers supplications and giving of thanks, according to his ability, the people joining in a joyful acclamation at the close, saying Amen. Those elements, over which thanks have been given, are then distributed and communicated to each one; and are sent, by the hands of the Deacons, to those who are absent. Next, they who are wealthy, contribute, according to their free will, of what they please to give; and the donations are collected and deposited with the President. His duty it is to assist orphans, and widows, those who are in want on account of sickness or any other cause, those who are in bonds, and strangers sojourning among us. In one word, he is the overseer of all the needy.' Justin then proceeds to state the reasons for their observance of Sunday: 'On the day of the Sun we all assemble together, because it is the first day, on which God brought the world forth from darkness and chaos, and because that Jesus Christ, our Savior, on that day rose from the dead. For they crucified him on the day before that of Saturn [Saturday:] and on the day following that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, he appeared to his Apostles and disciples.'* These are the grounds on which, it appears, the Christians of Justin's time, placed the observance of Sunday. They did not consider it as having any connexion with the sabbath, or as deriving any sacredness from the injunction laid upon the Jews to hallow that day.

V. We have now gone over the field proposed, pointing out to the reader all the facts with which we are acquainted. The amount of the whole is, that the Apostles and primitive Christians understood the divine institution of the Sabbath to have expired with the rest of the Mosaic economy; and that, without any express ordinance, it grew into a custom with them, in appointing a day for their religious meetings, to choose Sunday, from respect to Christ's resurrection. It was perfectly natural that they should adopt this measure. Some day was, of course, to be selected for their assembling; and since Saturday was appropriated to an observance then obsolete, which it was desirable to discountenance, what other day was associated with so much interest to them, as that on which their Lord rose from the dead?

VI. As Christians, we still have the same motive in favor of that day. It is not superstition, it is an original and universal propensity of our nature, that leads us to signify our estimation of great events, by some appropriate observance of the times at which they occurred; and in selecting Sunday for the public services of the sanctuary, we but follow the same general principle on which our citizens commemorate the

* Rom. xiv. 4—6. † Colos. ii. 16, 17. ‡ Acts xx. 7. § 1 Cor. xvi. 2. ‖ Rev. i. 10.

* Plinii Epist. Lib. x. Epist. 97. This is the passage to which Buck must have alluded, when he said (Theological Dict. Art. Sabbath) that 'Pliny bears witness of the first day of the week being kept as a festival in honor of the resurrection of Christ.' We may, indeed, conjecture, with some probability, that the *stated day* was the first day, and that the meeting was in honor of Christ's resurrection; but Pliny does not say so.

† Ignatius Epist. ad Magnes.

* Justini M. Apol. i. pp. 83, 84.

landing of the pilgrim-fathers, or the birth of American independence. That our own interests, as religious, moral, or even intellectual creatures, imperiously require certain stated periods to be set apart for self-cultivation and improvement, is too manifest to need much illustration with such as have carefully observed the constitution and habits of the human mind. Peculiarly quick to the influence of gross, external objects, necessarily engaged almost perpetually in the cares of sensual existence, we must be provided with certain occasions to call us off to the higher and more refined pursuits, or we shall fatally neglect ourselves, while attending with a single eye to the concerns of worldly fortune. In order to 'grow in knowledge and grace,' mankind as much need that a portion of their time should be appropriated to the inculcation of religion and virtue, as does the scholar, regular seasons for study, or the child, appointed hours for his recitations. In all these cases, the occasion operates as a strong motive to engage the attention, to awaken the dormant powers, and to give them the proper direction; and he would evince but little understanding of the laws which govern our minds, who should propose to dispense with means so plainly dictated by nature itself. From these considerations, it will be perceived how necessary it is that we have such an institution as our Sunday. But, at the same time, it ought to stand on its own proper ground in the public view; otherwise, it is likely to be abused to purposes of superstition by one part of society, and to become wholly disregarded by another, on account of its supposed extravagant and unnatural demands.

H. B. 2d.

MINISTERIAL QUALIFICATIONS.

An article appeared in the Messenger, a few weeks since, over the signature of "Clericus," animadverting upon the Resolutions of the Hudson River Association, on the subject of Ministerial Qualifications. This having called forth some remarks, from Br. Williamson, of the Anchor, to which our Correspondent has replied, we deem it necessary, to give the arguments of Br. Williamson, although the same courtesy was not exhibited to "Clericus," in the Anchor. We omit the introduction, as unnecessary to the present purpose, and copy as follows:—

"We begin then, with the caption of the article, we think it is calculated to convey to the reader, more than was intended in the rule adopted by the Association. The article is headed "Test of Fellowship," and the subject is treated throughout, upon the supposition that the Association had actually established a test of fellowship, in the common acceptation of the phrase. Now we do not see that such a construction, can fairly be put upon the rule of the Association. [Here follows the resolution which may be found in No. 48, vol. 1, of the Messenger.] This rule was not adopted as a test of christian fellowship, but simply as an ecclesiastical rule, which should point out to our committee, the principles upon which they were to decide relative to the *qualifications* of preachers of the gospel.

It appears to us that there is a broad line between a test of fellowship, (by which we understand a standard of christian character,) and a rule of an ecclesiastical body, specifying the qualifications which are considered necessary in an officer of that body. The station of a minister we consider as an official station in the Church of Christ, and an individual may be fellowshipped as a sincere christian, and yet not be qualified for an *office* in that church. Where then, is the propriety of calling that a test of fellowship which only points out the qualifications of an officer? If this is in fact 'a test of fellowship,' we have apostolic authority for establishing it, for Paul tells us very plainly what kind of men should be bishops and deacons in the church. When an individual claims our fellowship as a christian, it should not be withheld if he is "a good man and true," but when he offers himself as a candidate for an office, it appears to us, that there should be an inquiry instituted whether he is qualified to discharge the duties of that office; and we confess we cannot see the propriety of applying to a *rule* of procedure in this case the startling epithet, "test of fellowship."

The first remark of "Clericus," which we shall notice, is as follows:—"At the present time many of our most popular and useful preachers have no pretensions of that sort, and are in fact unable to write a sermon correctly, that is, without *gross* violations of the most common principles of Rhetoric and English Grammar." We are of opinion that this remark is incorrect in point of fact, and Clericus must have had a more low opinion of the intelligence of the Universalist community, than we are willing to entertain, in penning such a sentence. We do not believe Universalists are so ignorant as to award the palm of popularity to a preacher, who cannot even write a sermon correctly. We are unacquainted with any "popular and useful" preacher who is thus ignorant. We have no doubt that the time has been when a preacher of this stamp might have been popular and useful, but in this day, when almost every child is acquainted with the principles of the English language, we must confess that it looks somewhat like a solecism, to call a preacher popular and useful in one sentence, and in the next represent him as being so unpardonably ignorant that he cannot write a sermon without violating the most *common* principles of Rhetoric and English Grammar, and that *grossly* too.

If, however, such is the fact, and the standard of clerical qualifications, is so low among Universalists, that their "most popular" preachers cannot write a sermon without "grossly violating the most common principles of English Grammar," we should suppose it high time that the evil was remedied, and our preachers taught that they should know their mother tongue at least, before they are elevated to the clerical office. Clericus inquires whether the "Hudson River Association would disfellowship these preachers?" No, we think they would not. But they would endeavor to raise the standard of qualifications for office, so that in future our ministers shall learn to write a sermon in good English before they enter upon the duties of their office.

The main objection to Clericus, however, to the rule in question seems to be founded upon the apprehension that it will be the means of keeping many young men out the ministry. We think this is a mistaken idea altogether. We do not believe this rule will keep our young men from the ministry who ought to be in it. If a young man has not zeal enough in the cause, to induce him to learn the English language, and give six months to the study of Theology, we frankly avow it as our opinion, that he is unworthy of the office, and our denomination is better off without than with him. Clericus remarks that they "are poor, and cannot detach themselves from their ordinary callings long enough to qualify themselves as fully as they may wish." If Clericus will look again at the resolution he will perceive that it would not even require a man to leave his avocation for the purpose of pursuing his studies. The rule requires that the candidate shall pursue the study of Theology under the direction of a clergyman for the period of six months. It would no doubt be desirable that the time should be wholly spent in the study of the clergyman. But where this is not practicable, let the young man enter his name in the study of a clergyman as a student for the ministry; let the clergyman direct him in the books which it will be proper for him to study: then let the student give his leisure time to his books, and a portion of his nights too, and he will make good progress in his studies. If a young man is unwilling to do this, we hesitate not to say, that he has not the love of the cause which is an essential qualification for a minister.

There is yet another way in coming at the business. Let the student go into the family of a clergyman, and if he can preach at all, let that clergyman send him to places where preaching is wanted, a few times in the month, which would defray current expenses, or if not, let the clergyman give him a credit till he shall have entered the ministry. We believe we have few ministers who would not cheerfully receive a student into their families on these conditions. Under these circumstances we consider it a lame argument, which says that young men cannot conform to the requisitions of this rule on account of poverty.

Again, Clericus remarks that he should have still stronger objections to that part of the rule which requires an essay on some moral or doctrinal subject, if it was designed to make the candidate conform in faith to the opinion of the committee. We are free to state that was not the intent of this provision. It was designed simply as a rule which would give to the council who would be called upon to vote, an opportunity to judge of the talents of the candidate as a writer and speaker."

"TEST OF FELLOWSHIP."

Messrs. Editors—The strictures you allowed me to make in a recent No. of your valuable journal, touching a "*Resolution*," of the Hudson River Association, on the subject of ministerial qualifications, has at length received a reply from the junior Editor of the Gospel Anchor. Will you therefore suffer me again to trespass upon the patience of your readers, by way of *rejoinder* to the "defence" of Br. Williamson.

It seems that Br. W. has taken exception, in the first place, to the *caption* of my article, as above, and thinks that the phrase "Test of Fellowship," conveys more than was intended in the *Rule* adopted by the Association. He considers that the resolution in question was not designed "as a test of *christian* fellowship, but simply as an ecclesiastical rule," to govern the Committee in deciding on the *qualifications* of candidates for the ministry. Notwithstanding the objection thus urged, and the "broad line" of distinction Br. W. perceives between that which is properly a "Test of Fellowship" and an "ecclesiastical Rule," specifying qualifications, I am not satisfied that I have erred in my *nomenclature* of the intent and scope of the Resolution. If it does not positively set up a *standard* or *test*, whereby to *try* or *measure* the qualifications of candidates for the fellowship of that Association, I am really at a loss to understand what is its purport. I care not what you call it, whether a *rule* or a *regulation*; it prescribes certain attainments for the ministerial office, and it is presumed the Association meant to adhere strictly to the letter and spirit of the Resolution in granting Letters of Fellowship. They undoubtly intended that each candidate who should be *tested* by the *rule* established; who should be weighed in the scales of their own proving, and "found wanting," should not receive a license to preach the gospel in their communion, and of course such an one would be debarred their fellowship as a *ministering* Brother, if not as a "christian." I did not suppose the resolution prescribed a test of *christian* fellowship, as Br. W. insinuates, but it goes to all intents and purposes, to establish a test or condition of admission to the *ministerial* ranks. It not only "points out the principles" on which the Committee should "decide relative to the qualifications of preachers of the Gospel," but it declares that the candidate "*shall* be required to present a certifi-

cate," and that he "*shall* be able to pass a *good* examination." Thus rendering it imperative on him to abide the ordeal, and come up to the *touchstone* of qualification, without flinching!

I will waive this point, however, in deference to the hair-splitting scruples of Br. W. and proceed to a second point of defence which is included perhaps in the first. Br. W. considers that a minister holds an *official* station in the church, and that when a candidate offers himself for the office, there "should be an inquiry instituted whether he is qualified to discharge" its duties. Admitting all this, I would beg leave to inquire, particularly with reference to the subject under consideration, who has the right or authority to institute such an inquiry? Have the ministers of any order the right to constitute themselves as judges, to decide who shall and who shall not hold an *official* station in the Church? Shall those, Br. W. who have *elected* themselves officers of the Church, who have *assumed* the office of the ministry, have the power to appoint their associates or successors? This smacks too much of the "old leaven" of *Popish* infallibility and *clerical* usurpation, to find favor, I trust, with those who profess a faith so purely *republican* in its features as Universalism, and I devoutly pray that *our* ministers may ever keep their hands clean from the defilement of *priestly* ambition. If Br. W. or any other person can show me the "apostolic authority" for the clergy setting themselves up as a Committee of Censorship to decide upon the *literary* or *moral* qualifications of candidates for the ministry, I will confess my obligations for the favor, as I am incredulous on the subject.

In the 3d place, Br. W. discredits my assertion when I remark that "many of our most popular preachers cannot write a sermon correctly, that is, without gross violation of the most common principles of Rhetoric and English Grammar." I am not in the habit of wilfully making "incorrect" assertions on any subject, much less upon a matter where a false statement could serve me no possible advantage. Br. W. will therefore do me the justice to believe, that I penned the remark in question, calmly and deliberately, and in full view of acknowledged facts, within my own personal knowledge. I *know* of several *popular* preachers in our order, men who have a ready utterance, and who can *ably* set forth the doctrines of our Holy Faith, who not unfrequently in writing and speaking, use the *plural* number for the *singular* and the *objective* case for the *nominative*! Others there are whose *orthography* is by no means good! I speak not this as a general thing and as applicable to a large part of our Clergy, but the remark is true with regard to many, who are nevertheless *able* ministers of the New Testament. If Br. W. is still incredulous, and challenges me to the *test*, I pledge myself to make good my assertion, by reference to *names* and particulars, though such a task would be obviously invidious and unpleasant. Nor do I consider the fact of deficiency in literary attainments in our ministers to be *incompatible* with their popularity or usefulness, or any reflection upon the understanding of the Universalist community in general. If a preacher talks in a plain, sensible manner, to plain people, he may be both useful and popular, without knowing theoretically a rule of Grammar or principle of Rhetoric. This too Br. W. without any "solecism."

In regard to my remaining objections to the test Resolution, I have seen no reason for a change of opinion. Br. W. has acknowledged the force of those objections by attempting to explain away the ground of difficulty. A "six months" course of study, according to his interpretation of the rule, can be accomplished by a "student entering his name," for that period, and "giving his *leisure* time to his books!" This leisure time may therefore amount to one week or month, as it may happen. Verily, Br. W. I cannot see the use of requiring "six months" course of study, if you are obliged to devise ways and means to *evade* the requirement, by substituting the "leisure hours" in the six months, for that whole period. Again, you suggest that the student go into the family of a clergyman, who shall send him out to preach a few times in a month, in order to pay current expenses of living, while a student! &c. Will the student in such a case, be provided from the Preceptor's "barrel," or will he be allowed to deal out his own crude notions to the people before he is *fellowshipped* as an *officer* of the Church? Would it not be in direct violation of your test resolution, Br. W. for you to license a student to preach, before the probationary period of study had expired? The fact is, if your law is thus *evaded* at head-quarters; I desire no better evidence of its impolicy and inutility, to say nothing of its evil tendency in other respects.

I conclude my remarks for the present, by assuring Br. W. that I have never questioned, for a moment, that the Hudson River Association were actuated by the best of motives, in adopting the resolution under discussion. That they will carry out the measure still further, as is hinted in the circular letter, I cannot believe. On the contrary, they will, I trust, *repeal* the objectionable resolution at their next session, and leave the matter as they found it, untrammelled by *test* acts or *embargo* regulations. At all events, it will be well for the advocates of the measure, to attend to the arguments offered against it, (by Br. Grosh, of the Magazine, and others,) and answer them, *if they can*, before they proceed further in their restrictive system.

CLERICUS, alias L. F. W. A.

NIAGARA ASSOCIATION.

This Association met at York, Oct. 3, 1832. Appointed Br. S. A. Skeele, Moderator, and Brs. L. L. Sadler and H. Roberts, Clerks. Received the first Universalist Society of the towns of Belfast and Caneadea, in Allegany Co.; the Society in Weathersfield; and the Society in Middlebury in Genesee Co. into fellowship. Passed resolutions in favor of the Clinton Liberal Institute, and of a Conference to be held at Le Roy, on the first day of January 1833, to deliberate on the subject of church organization. This Conference to consist of ministers and a delegation of two laymen from each Society. Appointed Br. W. I. Reese to deliver an appropriate address on the opening of said Conference. The following resolution on the subject of ministerial qualifications for fellowship, was passed:

Resolved, That all candidates hereafter receiving the *fellowship* of, or to be *ordained* by this Association, as Gospel ministers, shall, at least, in addition to an unimpeachable moral character, be acquainted with the English language, well versed in the Holy Scriptures, and have a general knowledge of Ecclesiastical History—and that a committee of three be appointed at each annual session of this Association, to receive requests for letters of *fellowship* and *ordination* during the ensuing year, and report thereon at the next session; who shall examine the applicants, and possess themselves of all requisite information relative to their moral standing and qualifications, and to whom all petitions must be addressed, at least three months previous to their making their report. Appointed Br. J. S. Flagler, I. Whitnall, and C. Hammond, said committe for the ensuing year.

Appointed Br. Flagler to preach an annual sermon before the next Association, and Br. L. L. Sadler his substitute. Conferred ordination on Br. L. L. Sadler, and granted letters of fellowship to Brs. Justus Gage, Russel Tomlinson, and Kneeland Townsend. Appointed Br. J. S. Flagler standing Clerk for the year ensuing, and designated Br. Sadler to prepare the Minutes and Circular. Adjoined to meet at Lockport, Niagara Co. on the first Wednesday and following Thursday in October, 1833.

FUNERAL RITES.

Among all nations and in all ages the great and good have been received with peculiar honors in death.

The monument on the battle field to the courage and devotion of the warrior; the temple to the Savior of a country; columns and statutes to statesmen: philosophers and poets have been among the means of preserving from oblivion the names and characters of those who while living exalted themselves by their noble deeds, their generous patriotism, their wisdom, or their worth, above the nameless and admiring multitude.

But time laughs at the powerless exertions of man, and soon sweeps away the faint mimicry of the inequalities of life, which the magnificence or meaness of the splendid monument, or unlettered stone presents. Yet there is something praiseworthy in setting a mark upon those who were an example while living, and who have bequeathed a name to posterity, which may be a watch-word to awaken the spirit to noble deeds, and give it nerve and energy in its proud race to virtue and fame.

It is this principle that enlivens the historian at his toil—the sage at his meditation, and inspires the bard to buy for the warrior an immortality of fame in the traditionary songs of the sons of his country. The same that erected the temple to genius in olden time, and piles the sculptured tomb to the sage of modern days. But with a change in feeling and sentiment, with a difference in notions and belief as wide as the lapse of time that separates us, the rites and ceremonies we have been considering, wear a new character, and though robbed of the splendor of the Eastern, and the magnificence, and costliness of either Grecian or Roman pageantry they accord with the dictates of nature and humanity; they fulfil the end for which they were designed, the kind and greatful solace of a wounded heart. Earth to earth, when the animating and living principle is fled, is the language of nature and reason, and wherever revelation has dispelled the twilight of philosophy, and darkness of superstition, the victim and the cause have alike been banished.

The expression of tender regard, the decent and solemn disposal of the last remnant of mortality around which blighted affections love to linger, the sympathy of surviving relatives and friends, the sable vestments of the mourner, an emblem that the light of life has been extinguished: the sad and solemn train, slowly following to the grave, a faint representation of the mighty and numerous procession of the whole human family to the gates of eternity, these all are signs of grief that touch strongly on the heart, and while they awaken sympathy, as suage that sorrow which nursed in solitude entwines itself closer and stronger until its victim perishes in its folds.

"Study to be quiet," was an injunction of the apostle of Christianity to the ancient Thessalonians, and such is human nature, that the remark is equally applicable to the present age. There are men of captious and perverse dispositions, who, by their petulence, continually engender discord, and create confusion, and if, on every occasion, we were to oppose their cavils, the scenes of angry debate would be many and diversified. There is then a necessity to put a check upon our feelings, lest they should hurry us into excesses which would prove prejudicial. The sentence of inspiration implies a freedom or separation from contention and strife—a bridling of the tongue—a forgiving spirit—and, above all, patience and forbearance.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1832.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

The contemplated course of Sunday evening Lectures on doctrinal subjects to be delivered in the Orchard-st. Church, will commence to-morevening, Nov. 11th.

SUBJECT. The original, physical nature, and moral condition of man. Text, Gen. ii, 7.

An editorial article on Tests of Fellowship, is deferred to give room to the discussion between Br. Williamson and Br. Andrews on the same subject. S.

TRACT CIRCULAR.

We observe in the New-York Weekly Messenger a Circular under the hand of Dr. Milnor, President, and W. A. Hallock, Corresponding Secretary, of the American Tract Society, setting forth the wonderful things that Society is doing, and offering fifty dollars a piece for *ten approved tracts*. The publishing committee say that 'they have great pleasure in stating, that though it is the object of the Society to inculcate those great truths in which Evangelical christians harmonize, *the instance they believe has not yet occurred in their experience of seven years in which a Tract, ably and powerfully written, while the heart was warm, and with the single aim of honoring Christ in the salvation of perishing men, has been found objectionable in point of doctrine.*"

For ourselves we cannot regard this fact as surpassingly strange. We believe it is in our power to point out almost every variety of doctrine in the several volumes published by the American Tract Society. Calvinism, pure as from the lips of the Genevan himself, and Arminianism, its antipode, are interspersed in every volume, we might almost say, on every page. If these doctrines *harmonize*, we have only to say that much ink, and many angry words and hard names, have been used in vain. And if the publishing Committee can find nothing objectionable in either or both of these systems, we think they will incur no hazard of trouble hereafter "in point of doctrine."

"The Committee desire Tracts," they add, "clearly enforcing all those great *doctrines of the Gospel* announced at the time of the Society's formation, as "the basis of their union—man's native sinfulness—the purity and obligation of the law of God—the true and proper Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ—the necessity and reality of his atonement and sacrifice—the efficiency of the Holy Spirit in the work of renovation—the free and full offers of the Gospel, and the duty of men to accept it—the necessity of personal holiness, and an everlasting state of rewards and punishments beyond the grave."

Such is "the basis of union" in the American Tract Society—a statement "of those great truths in which evangelical christians harmonize." Let us look for a moment at one of those "great truths," "the necessity and reality of Jesus Christ's atonement and sacrifice," and see how beautifully evangelical christians agree upon it.

The Calvinist believes that "Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all them that are justified, and did make a proper, *real*, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf," and that "God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and that Christ did in the fulness of time, die for their sins." The Calvinist believes that Christ died for none but the elect, and that no others are interested in his sacrifice and atonement. The Arminian entertains much the same notions of the atonement, but with two somewhat important exceptions. The first is, that it was made for *all men, the whole world*; and the second, that it is not *real*, inasmuch as it is of no avail to discharge the debt owed to divine justice, only when man believes in its efficacy, and consequently though made for *all men*, it may never benefit one half, or indeed one tenth part, of the human race. If this be harmony of sentiment, on this "great truth" of the gospel, what may we call discord? But look a moment at the New School Presbyterians. They do not believe that Christ's sacrifice discharges the debt the sinner owes to the justice of God. They do not believe that Christ *really* and truly died instead of the sinner. They think his death designed *to make it possible, to open a way* by which God could be just, and yet the justifier of them that believe.

If Jesus Christ, by his obedience and death, did make, as the Tract Circular declares, a *real* atonement and sacrifice, the conclusion is irresistible, that each and every one for whom this real atonement was made, must be saved. Jesus Christ has fully and really atoned to Divine justice for his sins, both original and actual, and to inflict endless punishment upon him now, would be as unjust toward the sinner, as contemptuous toward his atoning Lord. This has been felt by our brethren of the New School. That Christ died for all, they must believe, their creed to the contrary notwithstanding. Hence this subterfuge. *Christ made it possible for one sinner to be saved*, we are told by these New-lights, *and what would make it possible for one would for another and another and so on to the last of the human race.* He who can discover the reality in this atonement, must possess more than ordinary discernment. And yet this is a class of those "evangelical christians" who harmonize so beautifully on the great truth of the Gospel.

We have no doubt that fifty dollars will buy a very good Tract, and we hope the publishing Committee will be abundantly successful in their undertaking. S.

"WHAT CAN A SINNER DO?"

Thus inquires Br. Crosby of the Baptist Repository. He then says, "One class of men, who claim for themselves a large share of the modern discoveries respecting a sinner's ability, tell him "he can repent as easy as he can raise his hand to his head;" but he finds the contrary so soon as he makes the attempt, and the Bible tells him that "no good thing" dwells in him; and yet repentance is a duty, and is the great prerequisite for heaven. The question returns then, What *can* the sinner do?"

Truly, what can he do? He finds by experience that he cannot repent, and the bible tells him that "no good thing" dwells in him; and yet it is a duty to repent, and one too that is "the great prerequisite for heaven." Br. Crosby has placed his sinner in an uncomfortable predicament indeed. Man must do something or be damned forever, and yet he can do nothing. Let us see how he is to be extricated. "We reply," says this discriminating editor,

"1. While in a state of indifference and unconcern he [the sinner,] can do no one thing which will be of any avail. The reason why? Because he *will not*."

Suppose a man is in such "a state of indifference and unconcern," that he would not "raise his hand to his head" to save his soul. Has he no ability, Br. Crosby, to do it? Can he do no one thing which would be of any avail? And is it a sufficient reason to say he *cannot* because he *will not*? But thus far the poor sinner according to our good friend's theology is just where he started, in "a state of indifference and unconcern." The editor proceeds,

"2. But he can feel and know that he is doing wrong every moment he lives, and is every moment in danger of Hell.

3. He can feel uneasy and anxious about his condition."

But the bible tells him that "no good thing," dwells in him, and consequently, the Bible tells him, "that when he feels and knows that he is doing wrong and in danger of Hell, and when he is uneasy and anxious about his condition," there is "no good thing," in all this feeling and fear—he is only doing wrong every moment he lives and sinning with a high hand against God. Thus far then the poor sinner has made no progress towards heaven. He is removed from his "state of indifference and unconcern," but how we cannot see, nor has Br. Crosby been so good as to inform us. Again he says,

"4. He can inquire, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do? How shall I escape the wrath to come?"

5. He can call on the name of the Lord for mercy, and if he does these four things there is hope for him; and none without."

And yet the Bible tells him that there is "no good thing" in him, and that he has no ability to do any thing good, or even "to will any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man being altogether averse from that which is good, and dead in sin, he is not able by his own strength to convert himself or to prepare himself thereto." Thus the poor man struggles, and calls "on the name of the Lord for mercy" and "feels uneasy and anxious about his condition," and knows that his every thought and every action is sin, and that "he is in danger of Hell." "If he does all this, says Br. Crosby, there is hope for him; and none without." And yet all this is only SIN. Suppose after all, he is one of the *non-elect*; how much hope is there for him? S.

THE PREMIUM.

Some months since, the Rev. Joshua Leavitt, editor of the "New-York Evangelist," a paper "devoted to doctrinal discussion," declared without reservation that "every one who reads his bible knows that it teaches the awful truth, that '*the wicked shall be turned into hell.*'" Supposing that he meant by hell, what is commonly our Limitarian friends, *a place or state of endless misery*, we at first offered the sum of $25, if he

would prove to the satisfaction of three distinguished Presbyterian or Congregationalist Clergymen whom we named, that the passage he quoted (Ps. ix, 17) inculcates any such doctrine.

After several weeks had passed, and no notice was taken, we were left to suspect that our offer was too insignificant to deserve attention, and consequnently *doubled* our premium without altering the other conditions.

Nearly two months have now elapsed since our last offer, and the Rev. Mr. Leavitt, has preserved an unbroken silence on the subject.—*Fifty* dollars is the sum offered by the American Tract Society for Tracts; and if Br. Leavitt's theology be correct, it must certainly be as easy to prove that Hell is a place or state of endless torment, as it is to write a good Tract.—But we are unwilling to attribute this neglect of our offer to any improper motives. If Br. Leavitt thinks he cannot spend his time for so small a premium, *we promise to make any addition that he may require, which our limited circumstances and the liberality of our friends will allow.*

Let it then be distinctly understood, that we will pay the sum of $50 to Br. Leavitt, if he will prove to the satisfaction of Dr. SPRING of this city, Dr. ALLEN of Maine, and Prof. STEWART of Andover Theo. Sem. that the word *hell* found in Psalm ix, 17, means a state or place of endless punishment. Or if $50 is insufficient, we will make any additions in our power.

We hope in consideration of the benefit which he would confer upon us, and half a million of Universalists in the U. S. Br. Leavitt will forthwith commence his labor. S.

HONESTY.

In the early part of the 1st vol. of the Messenger, we received directions from a person in Alabama, to forward the paper to a Mr. JONATHAN HILL, Allenton, Wilcox co. Alabama, and in pursuance of this direction, have continued it through the volume. Some three or four weeks since, we enclosed a *bill* in the paper, for the purpose of jogging the memory of this said Mr. Hill, in regard to the payment of the subscription. A few days since, we received a line from a *Mr. Jonathan M. Hill,* (whom we suppose the same man) dated Allenton, in which he says, he never "ordered the paper," and that "we may rest assured, he will never pay for it." Now, all we know is, the paper was ordered as above, and the volume has been sent fully out, before the least objection was made. From the tenor of the letter, we should judge Mr. Hill was not an Universalist, and we should rejoice that he was not, for we really hope no *Universalist* would continue to receive a paper *one year,* and then plead, "that he never subscribed for it," in excuse for not paying for it. He says, it is true, he "*sometime since,* requested the Post Master, to write us," but if he did, it has not reached us, and he has continued to receive the paper. What shall we think? P.

Original.

MESSRS. EDITORS—I observe some animadversions upon a communication of mine, published in the Messenger, some time ago, by a writer, who assumes the name of "Heretic." The writer, it is presumed, is a member of the New Jerusalem Church, at least his sentiments savor very strong of Emmanuel Swedenborg.

This writer asks, "If God knows and determines all future events, how can any man pray for any thing?" I answer in the case supposed, every man can pray to his maker, with the utmost propriety. Suppose I have the promise direct from my maker, that seven years hence, he will grant me every favor, or blessing that I can ask for, will it not be as natural for me to pray for the fulfilment of this promise, as it will be to breathe." Can I help praying for it? What is prayer, but desire? and can I help desiring the fulfilment of such a promise?

The writer further informs us, that "Hell does not proceed from the Lord. "Malice and rage," he says, "are fires of hell, but these do not proceed from the Lord," from whence he would seem to infer that there is no hell, but what proceeds from our evil passions; but as these evil passions now exist, and as God is as much opposed to their existence now, as he will ever be, he infers that the hell of evil passions will exist to endless duration.

Stop, friend a moment, and let us see the result of your reasoning. The Apostle Paul was once so mad against the Disciples of the Lord, that he breathed out threatening and slaughter against them. Now, according to your reasoning, Paul must of necessity, have had the same hell in his breast, the same persecuting spirit to all eternity. But Paul himself, tells us a very different story, from all this; he tells us "that it pleased God to seperate him from his mother's womb, and to call him by his grace, to reveal his son in him," &c. &c. From all, which it is very evident, that God designed that the hell in Paul's breast, should be only temporary, and should answer a good purpose in the end, and that to himself, and millions of others.

Now, that which is true of Paul, may be true of all mankind, and in a certain degree, doubtless is so.

The principles assumed by "Heretic," prove abundantly too much; they will prove, that because God never changes, that therefore creatures never change, or he will never change them; but I think Dr. Young, shows the best philosophy on this point, when he says:—

"Since God or man must alter ere they meet,
'Tis manifest, Lorenzo, which must change."

It is moreover notorious, as far as we can understand the mysticisms of Swedenborg, that local hells, were provided for men, as soon as men existed. Does he now tell us that the number of hells, is exactly equal to the number of the heavens, and that hence good and evil hold an exact equilibrium; and "that in this equilibrium, consists the free will of man." Nonsensical as these reveries are, they show that Swedenborg taught there were local hells provided for men. What were they provided for men for? It seems as cities of refuge were provided among the Jews—that the wicked might have a place of refuge to flee to, they being so much happier, or so much less miserable in hell, than they are in heaven. But further, according to Swedenborg's system, or reveries, there is a necessity in the nature of things, for an equal balance of good and evil to all eternity, otherwise man could not have been a free-agent. Well, admitting this necessity, what becomes of my opponent's notion of moral accountability. According to his notions, if every thing takes place, according to the free election of the Almighty, man is not accountable for his conduct—there is no such thing as virtue or vice; yet, nevertheless, these things may well consist with a necesssity over which God himself, has no controul.

There is nothing in the Bible to countenance the Swedenborgian, or Quaker notions of an endless hell consisting in evil propensity or remorse of conscience; nor is there any thing in common sense, that can discern the propriety of the following question of my opponent. "Will the Lord ever compel men to love him? if such a thing were possible, would men be any better or happier on that account?"

I answer that whosoever loves God is happy, and that the happiness flowing from this love, is the same, whatever may be the way, in which this love is communicated. In reply to the question, whether the "Lord will ever compel men to love him," I answer all who believe in a God, believe that he can, and does influence the minds of men—whether this influence leads or drives, whether it persuades or compels, the result is the same—and were I to judge from reason, and from the language of scripture, I should say, it sometimes leads, and sometimes drives—that it sometimes persuades, and sometimes compels. Paul says, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men—the servant was commanded to go out, "and compel them to come in." "The love of Christ constraineth us."—"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "The King's heart is in the hands of the Lord, he turneth it whithersoever he will." "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

There is not a more gloomy, or a more absurd idea than this, that man possesses an agency, which God cannot control—or that God cannot control the actions of a free-agent. The existence of man, every power and faculty of his mind, is derived from God, and it is "in him we live, and move, and have our being." Z. G.

P. S.—I have said above, 'There is nothing in the Bible, to countenance the Swedenborgian or Quaker notion of an endless hell, consisting in evil propensity, or remorse of conscience.' Whoever will read those passages, on which is built the orthodox endless hell, will find nothing like men's going to hell of choice, but that it is uniformly represented as positive punishment The wicked shall be turned into hell, (not go there of choice.) Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire. A fire is kindled in mine anger, and it shall burn to the lowest hell. Take him, bind him, hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. Fear him, who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. When our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, &c. &c. Not only is it represented as a positive punishment, but as a punishment by material fire. Z.G.

Original.

ADVANTAGES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE.

Let the United States deal justly, at home and abroad, and they can have nothing to fear. Foreign nations will court their friendship. And every inhabitant, let his stature, or color, be what it may, will cordially unite in maintaining the liberties and independence of a country, that yields him so much happiness.

Suppose that every man in the United States, was an expert warrior! would the government be any better able, than at present, to suppress insurrections, and maintain tranquillity?

Our soundest policy is, to be strictly just; and cultivate the spirit of peace.

Newton, Ms. K.

EXTRACT

From the Circular Letter of the Niagara Association.

When we cast our vision back through the shadowy vista of the past, and mark the progress of *liberal* sentiments, and the rapid advancement of that dear cause we have espoused—the cause of Christ, of humanity, and of God, amid the inveterate opposition, gigantic prejudices, and contumelious reproaches they have had to encounter, we are almost lost in wonder and astonishment. But a few years since, and this section of country constituted one of the outposts of our temple, the very border and frontier of our Zion. But lo! the tide has rolled on—the clarion voice of the Gospel trump, proclaiming the impartial goodness and universal grace of God, has been heard in the remote climes of the West, and we are left to take our station in the interior. But a short time since, and three small so-

cieties, with one or two preachers, were all that we could number within the territory, now including the Genesee and Niagara Associations—nevertheless, such has been the progress of *truth* with but limited means for its advancement, the last year it became absolutely necessary, from the numbers with which our Councils were thronged, to make a division—and strange to tell, although this was the first time we had met in Council, since the creation of this Association, mention was made of another division—a proposition that will unquestionably ere long, be carried into execution.

Brethren of our societies—suffer a word of exhortation. Though you are not directly called to *lead* in the great work of mental emancipation, yet you have a labor to perform. You have your respective spheres in which to move, and your several duties to discharge. Though you are not appointed to minister in holy things at the sanctuary, you have occasional opportunities of inculcating your sentiments among your neighbors and friends, and of imparting instructions to the ignorant and those who are out of the way, where the preacher can find no access. You have also occasional opportunities of diffusing the benign influences of Gospel grace into the bosoms of those whose hearts have been scathed with the blighting mildew of error; and of administering the consolations of our holy religion to the sorrowful and broken hearted. These opportunities should not be neglected; but ever faithful to the trust reposed in you, as the humble followers of Jesus, it should be your meat and your drink to do the will of your heavenly Father. You have much to encourage you in the laudable enterprise in which you are engaged, and much to stimulate you to still greater exertions, knowing that your race is not precarious, but sure of winning the prize. You have made a good profession—and so far you have done well. Now exhibit, in a holy walk and godly conversation, the doctrine you maintain—teach by example as well as by precept, "and let your light so shine among men, that others seeing your good works may be led to glorify your father in heaven." "Only let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, that, whether absent or present, we may hear of your affairs, and know that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

Brethren in the Ministry—When we contrast the past with the present we find much to gladden our hearts and to inspire our bosoms with hope. Much has been effected within a few revolving years. Religious theories and doctrines have undergone almost a total revolution—the *creeds* of men are taking a more mild and salutary turn—and people begin to think, reflect, and examine for themselves. We have enlisted under the banner of Almighty Love, and it is for us to lead in the great cause of philanthropy and Gospel liberty. Our friends are looking to us in confidence and with anxious solicitude; while our enemies are watching for our halting. Much depends on our steadfastness, diligence, and perseverance. Let us, then, be active, be vigilant, "always abounding in the work of the Lord," till the vital fluid that circulates in our veins shall cease to flow, and our hands and tongues are palsied in death. We teach the overthrow of sin, the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, and the destruction of satan and his works—and it becomes us to exemplify in our deportment the righteous principles we maintain. So let us live, and so let us execute the work assigned us, that when we are called to give an account of our stewardship, we may hear the welcome plaudit, "well done good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

Per order, L. L. SADLER.

NARROWNESS OF MIND.

Notwithstanding the wide spread of liberal principles in New England, we are yet sometimes called to witness manifestations of narrow-mindness on the part of professing christians, which we are confident no precedent for it can be found in the doctrines and precepts of the Prince of Peace. With some men it seems to be a point settled beyond dispute, that whatever does not come up to a certain standard, established in their own minds, is fatal error--and acting in reference to that opinion, all who differ from them in sentiment are set down as dangerous members of the community. It is painful to witness such things; and still more painful when duty and justice demand their public exposure--but we console ourselves with the hope that we are on the eve of better times—that the day is dawning, when all who name the name of Christ, and acknowledge him as their Lord and Master, realizing that they are the children of one common parent, created for happiness, and alike destined finally, through the merits of a crucified Savior, to mingle their voices in the ceaseless praises of redeeming love, will be led to discard the contracted sentiments which now possess their hearts, and give place to those feelings of benevolence and good will so eminently inculcated by that gospel of grace which bringeth salvation to all men.—*Independent Messenger.*

RELIGIOUS LIBERALITY.

A church is building at Freiburg, in Brisgau, under circumstances that deserve honorable mention. The late Grand Duke Lewis of Baden, a Protestant, having obtained from the Pope the creation of the above city and its environs into a bishopric, the magistracy and common council of that place, all Roman Catholics, voted the sum of 15,000 florins, towards the erection of a monument, as a mark of gratitude to their Prince. But, it being subsequently found, that the Protestants in the town, who had lately much increased in number, were anxious to have a place of worship for themselves, the Catholics, thinking that no mark of gratitude would be more welcome to their Protestant ruler than the building of a church for those of his own faith, resolved to appropriate the money to this purpose, and the building was actually commenced on the 25th of August, 1829, when the first stone was laid by the Catholic Archbishop, attended by his Chapter! The church is named after the Prince in whose honor it was founded, and is a glorious monument of a spirit of liberality, which is making rapid strides in Germany.

MORALITY.

It is with a man's morals as it is with his temporal concerns. If he suffer his business to get behind hand, he finds it very difficult to meet all his engagements, and utterly impossible to take any advantages which are constantly presenting themselves to the economist, who, in room of being in debt, has money to spare. A few days of relaxation from the wholesome rules of a moral life, will throw us so far back, that in room of having it in our power to make new advances in the 'noble and glorious work' of moral acquirements, it may consume some time, and cost no little exertion to retrieve what was foolishly lost.

This simple hint, should it be put to its most profitable use, may turn to more advantage than a superficial observer might expect, for should it induce any to avoid running into debt unnecessarily, or to exert economy to pay what they owe, the advantage would not be small. And if it should incite any to be on their guard against temptation, this is better than silver or gold.—*Universalist.*

CONNECTICUT CONVENTION.

The Connecticut State Convention of Universalists met at Berlin, on the 10th ult. Hon. N. Darling, Moderator, and Br. M. H. Smith, Clerk. A constitution was adopted, and Br. Spear, appointed to deliver the next annual sermon, and Br. J. Boyden, chosen standing clerk. Sermons were preached by Brs. G. Noyes, M. H. Smith, C. Spear, and R. Smith. Adjourned to meet in Danbury Conn. the second Wednesday in Oct. 1833.

A State Convention of Universalists, for New Hampshire, was formed at Claremont, on the 24th and 25th instant.

"EXPOSITOR AND REVIEW."

We observe in the last Trumpet, that the first No. of the "Expositor and Review" will be issued on the 1st of January ensuing, and thereafter appear regularly once in two months. We have a few subscribers for the work, the names of which we shall forward in due time.

At the recent session of the Northern Association at St. Albans, Vt. Letters of Fellowship were granted to Brs. Joseph Buker and Nathaniel Ewer, and ordination conferred on Brs. Z. C. Wood and C. Hollister. Ten Societies were received into fellowship, six of which are located in the northern part of Vermont, and four in Lower Canada, and all have been organized during the past year.

REMOVALS.

Br. A. A. Folsom, of Freeport, Me. has removed to Hingham, Mass. Br. D. Forbes from Maine to Claremont, N. H. and Br. J. C. Waldo, from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Boston, Mass.

The Universalists in Charleston, S. C. have purchased a valuable site on which they are about erecting a House of Worship.

*** An error occurred in our last in the caption to the Thanksgiving Hymn. We stated that the Hymn was written "by Miss J. H. *Kingsbury*"—it should have been "Miss J. H. KINNEY."

MARRIED,

In this city, by the Rev. T. J. Sawyer, H. H. Hoyt to Miss Catharine Ann Bixby.

DORCAS SOCIETY.

The Ladies' Dorcas Society of the Orchard-street Church will meet at Mrs. Hammond's, 418 Grand-street, on Wednesday next, 14th inst. at 3 o'clock, P. M.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES.

Received at this Office ending Nov. 7th.

C. D. jr. Riverhead, 2d Vol. $1; C. M. Derby, Vt. 2d Vol. $2, and $1 for Pamphlets; H. P. Newark; F. P. A. Trumbull; H. B. McDonough; Rev. L. F. W. A. Philadelphia; J. C. Hightstown, 2d Vol. $2; H. C. Staten Island, 2d Vol. $2; J. M. New-Haven, 2d Vol $2, G. W. Montgomery; H. L. and A. B. Newark. 1st Vol. each $2; G. R. Norwalk; Rev. A. C. T. Philadelphia; A. A. M'N. Bridgeport; B. M. U. Wolcott; J. D. C. Kempville 1st Vol, $5; for T. P. $1; and L. P. B. $2. Kempville, and, J. W. Wilson, $2; H. L. R. Middle Haddan $1; Rev. M. R. Portland; J. F. Union $1, 1st Vol. and $1, 2d. Vol; E. E. G. Walton.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. S. J. Hillyer will preach at Long Ridge, Sunday the 11th Nov.; at Bedford, Monday evening the 12th Nov.; at Whiteplains, Tuesday evening the 13th; at Sing Sing, Thursday evening, 15th; at Cortlandtown, Friday evening 16th; Somers, Saturday evening, 17th; North Salem, Sunday 18th, and at Ridgefield, Conn. Monday evening, 19th.

Br. R. Smith will preach at New Brunswick, Friday evening, 23d Nov.; at Hightstown, Sunday, 25th Nov.

HYMN.

Written for the Dedication of the first Universalist Church in Claremont, N. H. Oct. 24, 1832.

BY MRS. C. M. SAWYER.

In Earth's young days, when saints of old
Before Jehovah sinless bow'd,
And men, still clad in mortal mould,
Enjoy'd communion with their God;

Then first, on Sinai's hoary top,
The Almighty's law to man was seal'd—
'Mid smoke, and flame, and thunder-shock,
His awful presence was reveal'd!

The glory of His brow, dispel'd
The darkning gloom the mountain wore,
And Israel's prophet-son, beheld
A sight vouchsaf'd to man no more.

Gone are those days—but still around
Our sacred shrines, our holy fanes—
If there true worshippers are found
His presence, though unseen, remains.

Thou great Eternal! while, with joy,
We dedicate this house to thee,
May earnest praise our lips employ,
And lowly reverence bend the knee!

We boast no thrilling lyre, so sweet,
As Israel's monarch-minstrel strung;
But prayer and song, when here we meet,
Shall burst from many a grateful tongue.

Long may this sacred house, remain
A blessing and a joy to all,
And every sabbath swell the train
That here before thine altar fall.

CHEERFULNESS RECOMMENDED.

As far back as we can trace the history of man, so far we can trace speculations concerning him. Upon a slight examination, he seems to be a simple thing, capable of being easily understood; but when we take a nearer view, we find him more complex than we at first imagined. But in our inquiries, this is certain, dangers surround us, and evils are scattered thick along our path. Much of our happiness, or misery, depends upon the judgments we form concerning ourselves, and the objects that surround us. That much is to be done, to insure us even a state of tolerable enjoyment, is apparent. We have not only to guard against the approach of things that may impair our happiness, but we shall often find it necessary to extricate ourselves from difficulties into which we have run unawares. Much is to be done, and although we are weak, yet, by proper management, by being ever on our guard, we can preserve ourselves from gross mistakes, and by careful attention to the duties incumbent upon us, we can place ourselves, at least, within the neighborhood of that station, for which we were designed by our Creator.

We are none of us perfect, and probably it is best for us that we are not. Far better is it to be of this opinion, than to be always complaining of our condition, finding fault with the world, our fellow men, and every thing with which we stand connected. We shall never grow more reconciled to things, in the constant practice of finding fault with them. The continuance of our troubles is often occasioned by erroneous habits of thinking. That which we have been the sole cause of bringing upon ourselves, we are apt to impute to the direct providence of God. If we have indulged our appetites, and neglected to bridle our unruly passions, if we have taken no precautions and are the very means that are calculated to render us unhappy, ought we to murmur because we feel miserable? Is it a matter of wonder, that causes should produce effects? Is it not perfectly rational, that he that soweth to the flesh, should of the flesh reap corruption?

How unavailing, and how unwise is the practice of lamenting that we have so little enjoyment, while we use not the means requisite for obtaining it. But while we are using endeavors to obtain happiness, we ought not to form a wrong estimate, and aspire after more than is attainable in this life. When we consider what we are, and with what we are surrounded, and how liable we are to be affected unpleasantly, we ought not to expect, to enjoy life without interruption. He that expects a state of uninterrupted felicity, to be attained here will be sure of meeting with sore disappointments. He that anticipates most, will probably enjoy least, and hence, he is ever ready to complain of the baseness, and ingratitude of mankind. What does it avail us, if, in venting our spleen, we indulge in perpetual bitterness of expression, and feel ill humored towards all the world? Suppose we turn misanthropists and think to enjoy the sweets of revenge, by withdrawing ourselves entirely from all connexion with our species? Will the world mourn our departure, and sigh for our return? Shall we leave a chasm which cannot be again filled? Or shall we brood alone over our sorrows, unpitied, and unlamented?

The world is as it is, and by us cannot be essentially altered. But we are apt to judge of it as we think it should be, rather than as it is; and for this reason, many of our inconveniences exist only in our imaginations. If the real evils which exist, cannot at all times be successfully resisted, it ought not to surprise us if when joined with numerous unreal ones, their force should be overwhelming.

Many generous minds have been completely soured, by dwelling altogether on the dark side of things. They looked for perfection when every thing is confessedly imperfect; consequently disappointment succeeded disappointment. Complaints, murmurs, and repinings finish out the picture.

But he that is given to fault-finding, forgets that he himself is one of that race of beings, with which he is so much dissatisfied. If in his sullen moods, he arraigns before his tribunal, the world at large, and passes sentence upon it, are there not others, equally as morose as himself, who will claim the same privilege, and exercise the same fancied prerogative, and with the same right, and probably with as much propriety? Is it possible, that one isolated individual can be so much more deserving than the rest of his species? Worthy as he is, he will often find his own name among that number, which a brother Splenetic has set down as the vilest of the vile.

In all our doings, we ought to have some reference to our own happiness, and the happiness of those around us. But the man that is always complaining, acts the very reverse of this. Because he cannot enjoy all things, and make every thing and every body conform to his ideas of propriety, he will enjoy nothing; and to appearance, could he make out the destiny of others, they would be as unhappy as himself.

But I would not assume the position, that man has no cause for complaint. But murmuring, like every thing else, will soon become a habit by repetition, and when once established, things of trifling importance will, in imagination become worthy of serious consideration, and thus the individual will be harassed by every little occurrence, which ought to be passed by unnoticed.

There is indeed a wide difference among men, and if we are of the better sort, let us rejoice that we are so, and not destroy our own peace, because others are not. If fretfulness could benefit ourselves, or others—if it could call back the wanderer, and reform his life, it would be allowable. But where it is manifestly injurious to all concerned, wisdom would dictate that it should be abandoned, and the mild virtue of forbearance cultivated in its stead.—*Universalist.*

LIFE.—That which we call our own, is but lent us; and what we have received gratis, we should return without complaint.

"UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR."

As the "UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR" has been finally given over, by its former company of Proprietors, (its subscription list being transferred to one of our weekly papers,) the subscribers have formed a new company with the hope of reviving the work. They will continue it under the Title of the

EXPOSITOR:

AND UNIVERSALIST REVIEW;

which will be published in the same form, and at the same periods as the Expositor heretofore has been, and on similar paper, with the same size page and type, and at the same price, though the *number* of its pages will be somewhat increased.

To those acquainted with the former Expositor it may be sufficient to say that we aim at following out the plan originally drawn for that work; with one addition, however, which we trust will increase its value: we mean, the department of Review. That we must maintain the character of the publication as high, at least, as its former standard, we are well aware, unless we would forfeit the patronage which our brother Editors and several of our Associations have, especially of late, extended towards it. To their continued favor we humbly commend the undertaking.

PLAN OF THE WORK.

It will consist chiefly of—

Explanations of Scriptural Phrases and Subjects;

Dissertations on points of Biblical Literature;

Critical Interpretations of Texts;

Expositions, both argumentative and historical, of Religious truth, in general;

Reviews of such important Works as may be deemed specially interesting to Universalists;

A general Review of the present state of our Doctrine and Denomination, in this country, and as far as practicable, in other countries.

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} *Proprietors.*

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II. It will be printed on fine paper and elegant type. The Numbers as delivered to subscribers, stitched in handsome printed covers. A Title Page, Table of Contents, and Index of Subjects, at the end of the year.

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